



*Iraqi crew at work at Alwaiya Children's Hospital.*

## Iraqi engineers help rebuild Baghdad ...

Despite getting knocked down by back-to-back bomb blasts, he still reported for duty that morning.

And when he arrived, his fellow workers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers got him to the hospital to have his facial cuts, black eye, and contusions treated.

Engineer Abdul-Kareem says he was in a taxi on the way to a project site in downtown Baghdad two months ago when an improvised explosive device was detonated killing a bystander and wounding several others. He was exiting the cab to provide first aid when a vehicle drove into the crowd and triggered a second explosion killing at least a dozen more people.

"Despite that incident and many more every day, the insurgents aren't going to discourage us from doing the right thing for our country and our people," engineer Abdul-Kareem said. "Yes, it's a difficult time. But those in need are looking for help and we're going to continue to do everything we can to offer it to them."

His team of 30 fellow Iraqi engineers are in charge of rebuilding worn out water treatment plants, renovating hospitals and schools, installing new neighborhood electrical networks, replacing old sewer mains, building new courthouses and fire stations.

"We need to keep the wheel of reconstruction moving to ensure basic essential services are restored in Iraq, defeating the insurgents' goal of demoralizing the residents here. It's a noble  
(continued on next page)



*Youth get medical care at Alwaiya Children's Hospital.*



*Engineer Abdul-Kareem is interviewed by Al Hurra TV reporter Ziad Zubaidy on a visit to some of his Baghdad projects with Maj. Robert Nash (background).*

# Iraqi engineers help rebuild Baghdad ...

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cause and by working shoulder to shoulder with the Americans, we'll accomplish the mission."

The 33-year-old has a Masters Degree in civil engineering and is working on a doctorate degree. His fellow Iraqi engineers have degrees in a variety of fields including structural engineering, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering. And they're out in the red zone every day visiting projects ensuring they're being done right.

Engineer Abdul-Kareem started working for the Coalition in 2003 as an interpreter but when U.S. forces discovered he was an engineer they asked him to do a lot more than just translations. He was part of Task Force RIE (Restore Iraqi Electricity) and eventually got his job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Today he is Deputy Resident Engineer of Gulf Region Division Central District's International Zone office and his two favorite projects are Baghdad Central Train Station and Alwaiya Children's Hospital

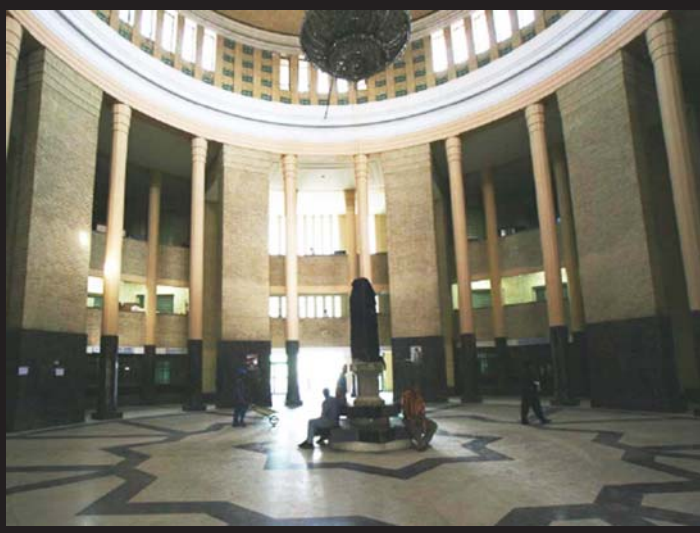
"Baghdad Train Station was my first huge project, a \$5.9 million contract. We replaced all the electrical, water and sewer lines, repaired the roof, installed two new seven-passenger elevators, rehabilitated the restaurant, new fire alarm system, new entrance, new partitions, new windows, new bathrooms, refurbished the station's eight exterior platforms, put in two new 1.25mva generators, two 500-ton boilers, two air conditioning chillers, and added a VIP hotel with 13 rooms," he continued. "The Train Station is where I learned the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers QA responsibilities and the western way of overseeing construction. It's been a great experience. Prior to our work there, the Train Station was notorious for non-functioning restrooms and a foul odor from standing sewage in the basement. I'm proud of our role in correcting these problems. That facility has the potential to generate a lot of jobs; it's important to this area."

Regarding Alwaiya Children's Hospital, "it touches your heart every time you walk through their door. It comes down to the basics of humanity and helping save people's lives. Doctors and nurses there are now using equipment that was simply not available two years ago."

That \$2.9 million project involves upgrading and modernizing a 217-bed facility including a new water purification system, new mechanical system (both air conditioning and heating), medical waste incinerator, oxygen plant and central vacuum system, nurse call system, intercom paging system, data communications network, new toilets, showers and sinks, new exhaust system to remove unhealthy air and odors, a new generator for emergency power, new lighting, and structural repair.

"This hospital takes care of the poorest people in Baghdad. The medical staff was working in miserable conditions. Newborns and young children were dying there every day. We've made a difference and I'm pleased to have been a part of it. Alwaiya Children's Hospital is now providing health care at the same high standard as private hospitals here. It's great to see these youngsters benefiting from our efforts."

Maj. Robert Nash (OIC of GRC's IZ office) points out, "It's professional engineers like Kareem who will be in charge long after we've gone home. It's our goal to work ourselves out of a job as they march forward with the construction management techniques they're now utilizing." Maj. Nash's office is currently overseeing 135 projects worth over \$500 million and most of that work is being done by his Iraqi staff.



**Maj. Robert Nash stops by for a site visit to the Baghdad Central Train Station.**